



RESOLUTION

URGING THE CITY ADMINISTRATION TO USE \$2 MILLION OF HONOLULU'S FEDERAL COVID-19 PANDEMIC EMERGENCY FUNDS FOR THE CREATION OF A GRANT-IN-AID PROGRAM TO INCREASE OAHU'S LONG-TERM SELF-SUFFICIENCY, SUSTAINABILITY, AND RESILIENCY IN FOOD PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION, AND SECURITY.

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2020, due to the outbreak of a respiratory illness caused by a novel coronavirus commonly known as COVID-19, the Governor issued a Proclamation declaring the existence of a state of emergency in the State of Hawaii ("State") and invoked his authority under the Hawaii Emergency Management Act, Hawaii Revised Statutes Chapter 127A; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization designated the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic of international concern; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a national emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, on March 21, 2020, the Governor issued a Second Supplementary Proclamation, imposing a mandatory 14-day quarantine on all persons, including both returning residents and out-of-state visitors, entering Hawaii; and

WHEREAS, on March 23, 2020, the Governor issued a Third Supplementary Proclamation, which required all residents to remain at home except to engage in specified essential businesses and activities; and

WHEREAS, on May 4, 2020, the University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization ("UHERO") reported that:

- Efforts to slow the spread of the coronavirus have effectively shut down a significant part of Hawaii's economy because the mandatory 14-day self-quarantine requirement largely put a stop to tourism, and the stay-at-home order for all non-essential workers shuttered many businesses;
- This unprecedented pause in economic activity has had a profoundly negative impact on Hawaii, with a sharp drop in spending, employment, and income, including job losses that peaked at approximately 220,000 in April; and



RESOLUTION

- It estimates that by December of this year only half of tourism arrivals lost to the pandemic will have recovered and only 75 percent of economic activity lost due to the stay-at-home order will have been reversed; and

WHEREAS, the economic distress caused by the coronavirus pandemic has led to an increase in food insecurity for many residents in the City and County of Honolulu ("City"), including families with young children, as well as vulnerable seniors; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to feed the hungry, the City, the Hawaii Foodbank, the Bank of Hawaii Foundation, and the Hawaii Community Foundation have formed a public-private partnership to provide food assistance to recently unemployed individuals; and

WHEREAS, this public-private partnership has held two food distribution events at the Waipio Soccer Complex on April 30, 2020 and at the Aloha Stadium on May 6, 2020, with more events planned in the near future to meet the demand; and

WHEREAS, at each event, Oahu residents from approximately 4,000 households waited several hours in a line of cars that stretched for over a mile to pick up food staples, such as bread, milk, eggs, and fresh produce; and

WHEREAS, churches, non-profit organizations, and other organizations have also distributed food staples to the needy on Oahu; and

WHEREAS, although these programs have provided much-needed food to families, seniors, and other residents, they are not a sustainable way to distribute food to a large number of Oahu residents; and

WHEREAS, the pandemic has also highlighted our island's dependence on mainland producers, distributors, and shippers for a large portion of our food needs and security, as many staple food items have been wiped out at local stores; and

WHEREAS, for example, Hawaii will likely be affected by meat shortages, which have been caused by shut downs at mainland meat processing plants where workers have tested positive for COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the economic disruption caused by the coronavirus pandemic is severe and, as reported by the UHERO, likely to last through the remainder of 2020 and beyond; and



CITY COUNCIL

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
HONOLULU, HAWAII

No. 20-125

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, *Civil Beat* business writer Stewart Yerton wrote a May 12, 2020 article ("Hawaii's Struggling Farms Want the State to Become a Bigger Customer") about Hawaii's struggling farms in the age of coronavirus, noting that:

- The COVID-19 shutdown of hotels and restaurants has severely hurt the demand for local produce, with revenue falling 16.7 percent for Hawaii's agriculture industry;
- Although some farmers have pivoted to selling to food banks, online farmers' markets, and community-supported programs for short-term relief, these avenues fall short of being sustainable;
- Prior to the pandemic, Hawaii farmers already demonstrated the ability to scale up food production when presented with a steady, consistent market (for example, the Hawaii Ulu Producers Cooperative, owned by farmers and including more than 70 member farms that grow breadfruit, squash, sweet potatoes, papaya, and bananas, increased the production of breadfruit from 39,000 pounds in 2017 to 80,000 pounds in 2018 when offered steady demand); and
- State (and local) government can provide the steady demand for local food by shifting existing purchase orders to local farms for the needs of schools, prisons, hospitals, and summer fun programs; and

WHEREAS, in a May 13, 2020 *Honolulu Star-Advertiser* editorial ("Let's reseed our agricultural economy"), Kalona Brand Co. president and CEO Kawika K. Burgess, reflecting on how the pandemic has severely impacted Hawaii's economy, wrote that:

- Hawaii continues to import 85 percent of its food and other necessities, and billions of dollars leave the State each year as a result;
- A strong and regenerative agriculture industry providing food, fuel, and fiber can provide a much more resilient, diversified, and sustainable future for our families, communities, and our islands;
- We have an opportunity to rebuild our economy by creating industries and regenerative business models that can make our islands more resilient for the next time we are faced with a crisis and additional disruptions in the future; and
- While there are currently a number of organizations, efforts, and private enterprises working to diversity our economy and revitalize agriculture and



RESOLUTION

the manufacturing of Hawaii-grown and –made products, our government and our local institutions can play a much greater role by providing support and incentives to these industries and businesses that are revitalizing our aina, building soil, sequestering carbon, growing food, and providing for our basic needs while preserving the unique quality of life that we all love and enjoy in these islands; and

WHEREAS, the Council Chair has recently established the Select Committee on Economic Assistance and Revitalization ("EAR Committee"), which, in addition to developing recommendations on the best use of federal emergency funds to address existing pandemic needs and expenditures, will also "assert the Council's role to promote a sustainable revitalization of our local economy"; and

WHEREAS, on May 13, 2020, the EAR Committee held its first meeting, at which and members of the City Administration testified, including:

- The Mayor's Chief of Staff, Gary Kurokawa, who noted that the mass food distribution events, as well as the kupuna meal deliveries and Farm to Car events, have demonstrated the severe needs of families on Oahu;
- Community Services Director Pam Witty-Oakland, who stated that the Meal Delivery and Food Security Services program areas reflected the greatest community need, as well as the opportunity to use local produce and local meats exclusively; and
- Chief Resiliency Officer Josh Stanbro, who testified that the long lines of cars waiting for food distributions have demonstrated the need for a diversified economy with on-island agriculture to assist in the long-term economic recovery on Oahu and to enhance sustainability and resilience in the future; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that both the Council and Mayor take steps not only to alleviate the food insecurity now afflicting vulnerable Oahu residents, but also to use this unprecedented emergency to face the long-term need to increase food resiliency and security in order to address our island's vulnerabilities in the future, especially during future emergencies; and

WHEREAS, in light of the foregoing, the Council finds it prudent and imperative to use federal emergency funds to not only address immediate needs, but also to plan for our long-term needs regarding food resiliency and security; now, therefore,



CITY COUNCIL

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
HONOLULU, HAWAII

No. 20-125

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that it urges the City Administration to use \$2 million of Honolulu's federal COVID-19 pandemic emergency funds for the creation of a grant-in-aid program to increase long-term self-sufficiency, sustainability, and resiliency in food production, distribution, and security; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Administration is urged to use these federal emergency funds to select the most qualified applicants who demonstrate a commitment to eco-friendly farming without sacrificing overall food sustainability and security goals; and



CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
HONOLULU, HAWAII

No. 20-125

RESOLUTION

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Mayor, the Managing Director, the Director of Community Services, and the Director of Budget and Fiscal Services.

INTRODUCED BY:

Ngyn Pua

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

MAY 14 2020

Honolulu, Hawaii

Councilmembers

CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
HONOLULU, HAWAII
CERTIFICATE

RESOLUTION 20-125

Introduced: 05/14/20 By: KYMBERLY PINE

Committee: COUNCIL

Title: RESOLUTION URGING THE CITY ADMINISTRATION TO USE \$2 MILLION OF HONOLULU'S FEDERAL COVID-19 PANDEMIC EMERGENCY FUNDS FOR THE CREATION OF A GRANT-IN-AID PROGRAM TO INCREASE OAHU'S LONG-TERM SELF-SUFFICIENCY, SUSTAINABILITY, AND RESILIENCY IN FOOD PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION, AND SECURITY.

Voting Legend: * = Aye w/Reservations

05/20/20 COUNCIL RESOLUTION 20-125 WAS ADOPTED.

9 AYES: ANDERSON, ELEFANTE, FUKUNAGA, KOBAYASHI, MANAHAN, MENOR, PINE, TSUNEYOSHI, WATERS.

I hereby certify that the above is a true record of action by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu on this RESOLUTION.



GLEN I. TAKAHASHI, CITY CLERK



IKAIKA ANDERSON, CHAIR AND PRESIDING OFFICER